



LINCOLN CHAFEE

U.S. SENATOR

RHODE ISLAND

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CHAFEE ANNOUNCES LIBERIAN PRESIDENT ELLEN JOHNSON-SIRLEAF WILL VISIT RHODE ISLAND

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, **U.S. Senator Lincoln Chafee (R-RI)** spoke with Charles Minor, Liberian Ambassador to the United States, who confirmed to him that newly elected Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf will visit Rhode Island during her upcoming visit to the United States. Chafee recently invited President Johnson-Sirleaf to visit Rhode Island and the large Liberian Diaspora community within the state. Her visit is expected to take place in Providence on March 19th.

Chafee has been active in Liberia's return to democracy, as he was invited by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to help oversee Liberia's first election after over two decades of civil war. He was joined by former President Jimmy Carter, Congressman Donald Payne (D-NJ), U.S. Ambassador Donald Booth and other Administration officials who visited the polls on Election Day, October 11, 2005, and observed the counting of ballots.

"I am pleased that President Johnson-Sirleaf will visit Providence and meet with the flourishing Liberian community in Rhode Island," Senator Chafee said after speaking with Ambassador Minor. "Her visit will demonstrate the historical and cultural ties the United States and Rhode Island share with Liberia and West Africa."

"Having participated in the election as an observer, I am encouraged to see this once struggling nation return to democracy after many years of tyranny. I am proud to host President Johnson-Sirleaf as we discuss ways for the United States, members of the Liberian Diaspora, and the people of Liberia to work together to help Liberia continue its recovery from its bloody and oppressive civil war."

The Senator's office will work with the Liberian Embassy and Rhode Island Liberian community groups to plan the President's visit. More details will be provided as they become available.

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